

workforce policy, including introduction of pre-tax benefits as a component of compensation, and personnel elements written into the legislation creating the new Department of Homeland Security. For his contributions John received the Director's Award for Excellence in October 2002.

John retired from OPM in January 2003, but his newly won status was short-lived when he was approached by the Director as her choice to represent the agency with our Committee. I am very grateful that John placed his dedication to public service above his own well-earned interests by accepting the appointment. During the past two years his expertise contributed directly to our key initiatives including establishing the new National Security Personnel System for the Department of Defense, improving benefits for Federal employees and retirees, and providing diligent oversight of personnel management across the Government.

On January 7 of this year, John completed his last day of service with the Committee and resumed his status as "retired." I believe John really means it this time, and we promise not to further interrupt his plans. On behalf of our entire Committee, I express deep appreciation to John for his superb service to our Nation, and I wish him many happy and healthy years ahead to enjoy with his wife Rita and their family.

FLIGHT OF FREEDOM—A JOURNEY TO SAVE JOBS

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2005

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw my colleagues' attention to the "Flight of Friendship—A Journey To Save Jobs", which is a heart-warming effort underway in the great state of Oregon. The Flight of Friendship is a people-to-people effort by individuals in Oregon who are coming together to provide an economic lifeline to people in Thailand who work in or are dependent upon the tourism industry for their livelihood. Tourism is recognized as one of the key industries in the tsunami-affected area that provides sustainable jobs and the one that can be jump-started by the return of tourists as in this Flight of Friendship.

The Flight of Friendship's formal mission is an admirable one: In the aftermath of the catastrophic tsunami that struck South Asia on December 26, the natural reaction for us was to do something, anything, that would bring some measure of relief to those in the affected areas. We wanted to do something NOW because we have such a feeling of urgency.

Many of us may not have the skills to rebuild communities or repair broken bones or care for orphaned children, but we do know that our humanity has a purpose. When we can take our time and provide a conduit for information and give face-to-face support by traveling to those areas and help those who need to stay working, we know we are giving something that matters. We can help tell the world that these restaurants, hotels and entertainment venues are open and ready to receive visitors.

Flight of Friendship will focus on cities and regions that depend on the tourist trade for

economic survival. We hope that Oregon's lead and example will challenge others from around the U.S.—private citizens and the travel industry as well, to follow. We encourage people to visit these beautiful, intriguing places and extend an economic lifeline. Flight of Friendship is a journey to save jobs.

Under the leadership of Oregonians Sho Dozono, Joe D'Alessandro and Elaine Franklin, over 100 business and political leaders from the state of Oregon will travel to Thailand this month in a significant effort to help re-establish that country's tourism industry and keep vital jobs in place. I would like to commend every person associated with the Flight of Friendship for his or her dedication to making a real difference.

TRIBUTE TO DR. DAVID LIEBER

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2005

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, Mr. WAXMAN and I pay tribute today to a remarkable individual and a dear friend, Dr. David Lieber. Dr. Lieber will be joined by his colleagues, family and friends on February 10, 2005, at a special University of Judaism dinner to celebrate his 80th birthday. The dinner's theme, "Walking Humbly with God," is especially fitting given the enormity of Dr. Lieber's accomplishments and the humility for which he is well known.

Since 1956 when Dr. Lieber was appointed Dean of Students of the nine-year-old University of Judaism (UJ), he has been a driving force for improvement and expression. He helped transform the University from a Hebrew Teachers Institute that offered adult classes in what is now known as Korea Town into a nationally recognized educational institute complete with an undergraduate college, graduate programs in education, business administration, Jewish studies and rabbinic studies, a large library and two think tanks. He served as University President for an impressive twenty nine years until he retired in 1993.

Dr. Lieber continues to be intellectually and spiritually inspirational to the Jewish community. Since his retirement as University President, he dedicated himself to assembling a superb team of scholars and produced Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary, a work that makes it possible for millions to benefit from his knowledge and dedication. We have known him for many years and have great respect for his wisdom and guidance.

Throughout his lifetime, Dr. Lieber has worked on behalf of many issues of importance to the Jewish people. He is past president of the Rabbinical Assembly and served on the Assembly's Executive Committee. He chaired its Strategic Planning Committee which evaluated needs of the religious body into the year 2000. He is an ordained Rabbi and former spiritual leader of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles 1950–1954. He served as Chaplain for B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at both the University of Washington and Harvard University. In recognition of his work, he was awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters degree, honoris causa by Hebrew Union College in 1982 and the Torch of Learning Award by Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1984.

Dr. David Lieber received a BA, magna cum laude, in 1944 from College of the City of New

York and a Bachelor of Hebrew Letters from Jewish Technological Seminary of America. In 1947 he was awarded a Master's degree from Columbia University and received a Doctor of Hebrew Literature Degree from Jewish Theological Seminary in 1951.

Dr. Lieber and his accomplished wife, Dr. Esther Lieber, were married June 10, 1945, are the proud parents of Michael, Deborah, Daniel, and Susan. They have twelve beautiful grandchildren.

It is our distinct pleasure to ask our colleagues to join us in saluting our dear friend Dr. David Lieber and the institution he built for our children and generations to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2005

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, due to circumstances affecting the health of a family member, I was not present for rollcall vote Nos. 7 through 13 on January 6, 25 and 26. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" with reservations on rollcall vote No. 7, "yea" on rollcall vote No. 8, "yea" on rollcall vote No. 9, "yea" on rollcall vote No. 10, "yea" on rollcall vote No. 11, "yea" on rollcall vote No. 12, "no" on rollcall vote No. 13.

WOMEN AND SOCIAL SECURITY

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 1, 2005

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to denounce the fake Social Security crisis that President Bush is trying to sell to the American public.

As the new Democratic Chair of the Women's Caucus, I am especially concerned because women and children are the first targets to be thrown off the lifeboat.

We expect women to raise families, support elderly family members and take care of children.

But, women lose more years of retirement savings when they stop working to raise kids or take care of parents.

Therefore, they depend more on Social Security when they retire. Social Security has been a strong program for its beneficiaries. In my district in East Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley in LA County, there are 59,525 Social Security beneficiaries who rely heavily on their hard-earned monthly Social Security benefits. The average Social Security benefit for these individuals living is \$787 a month.

If we are looking at just retired workers alone, they only receive \$540 a month. For many people, particularly Latinos and other minorities, this benefit is their only source of income. My district is very diverse. Sixty-two percent is Latino, and 18 percent is Asian. Forty-one percent of elderly Latinos have Social Security as their only means of income. Without Social Security, over half of America's Latino elderly would live in poverty. Social Security is especially important for minority women.

They will be left most vulnerable to the Republican privatization scheme because they